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SUBJ Take 3 of 3 -- Abalkin 15 Nov News Conference

Full Text Superzone of Message

1 [Editorial Report] An APN correspondent asks about the difficulty of the present state of affairs and whether the population expected to wait.

2 Abalkin says everyone is waiting for an instant miracle. In the past, he says, it is at times like this that reports of UFO's start circulating. We must convince public opinion, by means of the truth and nothing but the truth. Huge disappointments are inevitable after huge illusions. The unfortunate must be made aware of the state's concern for their well-being. We must not give way to emotions. The individual must be made to feel his own responsibility and the importance of this work. The republics must be given their chance: In 1990 they must be zones of change; they must show that things are changing for the better.

3 An ABC correspondent, speaking in English with superimposed Russian translation, asks: "President Bush has said that he wants perestroyka to succeed. What steps would you like the United States to take in the economic sphere to help perestroyka succeed?"

4 Abalkin responds: "We must do most of the work ourselves. I remember what Bush said about Poland and Hungary. He was quite right, I think, when he said, as a wise and realistic politician, that the Poles and Hungarians themselves must bring their country out of economic crisis, just like the Soviet people must do. We must do this ourselves. I am concerned most by what must be done in our country in these matters. As for what can be expected of the United States of America, which might be of assistance, I do not wish to develop this topic, because apart from the most general concepts with which you have all long been familiar -- decide the issue of the most-favoured nation system, remove some other restrictions -- I shall not be enriching our knowledge with anything."

5 The (?Harlems Daglad) correspondent, speaking in Russian, asks: "We did not all manage to follow the debates conducted at the conference. Could you perhaps tell us more specifically which points gave rise to the most negative reaction from the conservatives, and how do you reckon to break this opposition?"

6 Abalkin answers: "We have a great deal of historical experience on how to break the opposition. [laughter in hall] Therefore, the main task is how to learn to hold a dialogue with the opposition. The best way is to compel the conservatives to do battle with the radicals, while we get on calmly with the job at hand. [laughter] That would be the wisest solution, we have both radicals and conservatives. At the same time, we must take all the valuable and useful and sensible things offered by both of these, and include these in our programme and get on along our own way. As for the aspects which came in for criticism, I would limit myself to just two approaches. Emotions carried over from meetings were present at the conference; and there were also scientific discussions.

7 "Everything starts at the very beginning: Should state property be left unaltered, or should we start to modernize and renew, make it more flexible and start the process of de-etatization, given labor collectives on this basis the freedom to decide matters independently and to elect their manager. Or should we maintain the system of administration by injunction. Should we move to a market with new laws of regulating it, with flexible and mobile prices. Or should we as before keep prices unambiguously under harsh state control. A quite normal process is under way, not a very pleasant one, but a normal process of counterposing and weighing up and so forth. At the same time -- and this is also a very

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C00175440 own thing -- the existence of any opposition compels one to sharpen one's instruments of argument, compels one to weigh up more attentively the possible consequences, which might be overlooked were there no such criticism. Altogether, in the final analysis, if there is no destructive action and no struggle, one can derive useful things from this, if one regards taking account of diverse points of view as a factor making it possible to ensure a more realistic program of action.

8 "Thank you for the interest you have shown in the work of our conference and in our commission's work. Thank you." (ENDALL) 171903 [REDACTED]
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